



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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January 5, 2009

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H. *je fielding*
Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **USE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AMENDMENTS AND SOLE SOURCE
AGREEMENTS TO IMPLEMENT SCREENING, BRIEF INTERVENTION,
REFERRAL AND TREATMENT (SBIRT) PROJECT**

This is to inform you of steps being taken to implement the Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral and Treatment (SBIRT) demonstration project which was recently awarded to the Department of Public Health (DPH) Alcohol and Drug Program Administration (ADPA). The award allows for unexpended California SBIRT funds to be used under a one year program extension for the Los Angeles County Demonstration Project. DPH is required to accept the grant and begin immediate implementation, to preserve the funding.

In order to implement the grant with the short time frame provided by the granting agency, DPH has identified two provider agencies that are positioned to rapidly initiate services. DPH intends to use delegated authority to administratively augment two existing service provider contracts with Behavioral Health Services (BHS) and Homeless Health Care Los Angeles (HHCLA), and seek Board approval in January 2009 for two new agreements with BHS and HHCLA to continue SBIRT.

Background

In February 2008, the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (CDADP) approached ADPA with a proposal to add Los Angeles County as an additional site for its SBIRT demonstration project. The Los Angeles SBIRT will provide screening and intervention services to high-risk short-term detainees who are in custody between 72-96 hours. Los Angeles County Men's Central Jail and Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Parker Center Community Transition Units (CTUs) were identified as the most suitable locations for implementing this intervention because they are high-volume sites with a high-risk population. On October 15, 2008, ADPA received notification from CDADP that its request to add Los Angeles County as an additional site for the demonstration project had been approved. The Notice of Grant Award from CDADP along with the Terms and Conditions were electronically transmitted to ADPA on December 12, 2008. They include a requirement that ADPA accept the grant and begin immediate implementation of services to meet the federal requirements and preserve the funding.

The SBIRT project is funded under a larger grant CDADP received from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The original grant provided funding for the SBIRT project in emergency rooms, trauma centers, and health clinics in San Diego, and CDADP recently received SAMHSA's approval to use unexpended grant funds to establish the new SBIRT site in a non-medical setting in Los Angeles County under a one year program extension. The Los Angeles project is funded at \$2,563,093 for the period of September 26, 2008 through September 29, 2009.

Because this is a one year extension for California's SBIRT project, SAMHSA requires rapid implementation. BHS and HHCLA have been identified on a sole source basis due to the time limited funding, their capacity to quickly implement this project, and because they have significant experience in working with local law enforcement and serving incarcerated individuals. BHS has been identified as the provider at the Men's Central Jail and HHCLA has been identified as the provider at the Parker Center jail site. These agencies also operate the only Community Assessment Service Centers (CASCs) serving the Downtown area where the SBIRT project is being undertaken. Both BHS and HHCLA were originally selected as CASCs based upon a competitive bid processes.

To immediately begin services for the project as required by the grantor, ADPA plans to implement the adjustments and reallocations provision in existing agreements with BHS and HHCLA, using the delegated authority granted by the Board on May 30, 2006. This provision allows the Director of Public Health or his authorized designee to augment funds in amounts up to 25 percent of each contract's budget. ADPA will administratively increase funding for BHS contract H-702261C and HHCLA contract H-702293B by up to \$200,000 each. The CEO and County Counsel reviewed and concurred with this approach.

Approximately \$128,000 of the grant funds is budgeted for ADPA administrative costs and another \$250,000 is allocated to training and evaluation services provided by the University of California Los Angeles. In January, ADPA will request that the Board ratify their acceptance of the grant and approve allocating the remainder of the grant funding equally to BHS and HHCLA to provide SBIRT services. All SBIRT activities are fully funded by the SAMHSA grant.

Project Description

The SBIRT project entails the use of the Alcohol, Smoking, and Substance Involvement Screening Test instrument (ASSIST) to screen potentially high-risk, short-term detainees for alcohol and/or other drugs (AOD) risk factors, and refer those needing more extensive treatment services to community based service providers.

Screening for problematic substance use provides an opportunity to quickly identify individual risk factors and the potential level of harm for persons who use alcohol, tobacco, and other psychoactive substances. It also provides a venue for educating the target population about the risks of substance use and will be used as a health promotion strategy to encourage individuals to reduce the risks associated with their substance use behaviors. Screening can improve the health and safety of individuals and communities.

The SBIRT project will use experienced substance abuse counselors at both jail sites to provide screening and intervention services for 10,000 at risk detainees. ADPA currently contracts with BHS and HHCLA for the provision of community assessment, referral, tracking, and other program services.

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Approval of these agreements with BHS and HHCLA on a sole source basis will ensure the SBIRT Demonstration Project in the County and City jail sites is implemented quickly, so that public health intervention for short-term detainees may be provided. The potential impact on the community includes increased offender access to community supportive services, reduced AOD use prevalence, lower recidivism rates, and reduced jail overcrowding.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

JEF:amh

c: Chief Executive Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel